

# CHINA REPORT

November 2022

**HARVEST FIELDS MISSIONARY PRAYER MEETING 4<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022.**  
**(Kindly delivered in proxy by brother John F. Parkinson)**

- **OPENING GREETING**

First, our warm Christian greetings to you and our sincere thanks to Harvest Fields for the invitation to give this report. It is a joy to update you on what the Lord is doing in China. It is said of Paul and Barnabas, on reaching the church in Jerusalem, that "They reported all things that GOD had done with them" (Acts 15:4). It is a pleasure to give you this brief report.

- **INTRODUCTION OF JOHN AND KAREN SHORT**

We are from Australia, missionaries for 58 years serving and living in China, Hong Kong. On our arrival in 1964, China was tightly locked down behind the "Bamboo Curtain." The disastrous Cultural Revolution of 1966 was about to be unleashed upon all of China and would last for 10 tragic years.

Hong Kong was then an amazing British Colony known as "The Pearl of The Orient," and was the great escape route for hundreds of thousands of desperate refugees. In those early days I worked in an assembly clinic in a refugee area. I pulled teeth in the mornings and learned the Cantonese language in the afternoons.

After many refusals, we were at last granted permission in 1980 to enter the mainland of China. We were able to commence our ministry throughout China's more than 30 great provinces and municipalities. What was our ministry? **It was to publish and distribute hundreds of thousands of portions of GOD's Word via the Christian Book Room, a century-old gospel witness in China.**

Along with others who believe in literature ministry, we knew that the placement of Bibles into China after the Cultural Revolution would be the foundation of future growth and lasting fruit in modern China. We have seen the Lord build a vast network of active co-workers and distributors of GOD's Word. We also print and distribute Gospel and Assembly distinctive materials. Writers such as William MacDonald, Alfred Gibbs, C. H. Mackintosh and Harry Ironside comprise the major source of our publications.

We personally reckon a day as unfulfilled (even lost) if we have been unable by the grace of GOD to sow some of the GOOD Seed somewhere, somehow, especially throughout China, but also in all of Southeast Asia.

## • DEVELOPMENTS IN HONG KONG

After the British handover of Hong Kong to Beijing in 1997, my wife Karen and I have continued for another 25 years to live on "A borrowed promise" that there would be no change in Hong Kong for 50 years. We believe that it is God's will for us that we remain in this part of China for as long as we possibly can. Therefore, we thank everyone who has supported us in prayer and substance to be here for Christ and the Gospel.

These last three years have perhaps been the most challenging of our 58 years here. The local revolution that took place in Hong Kong from 2013-2019 has produced an enormous change. The Beijing government imposed the "New National Security Law" which has resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of most of the high-profile leaders of those protests. Another 10,000 face impending trials.

We ourselves have found grace to continue through these tumultuous years, meeting with reduced numbers of believers, yet enabled to maintain an active Gospel Witness. We can relate to what Paul said in 1 Cor 16:9 "An opened door that offers wide and effective service has remained open for us, although amid much opposition"(Amplified Bible).

In Revelation 3:8 we are told that When GOD shuts doors, He will always open others. We simply need faith, grace and patience to do His will. We go out daily, early mornings and afternoons, 6 days per week, loaded with our red "Blessings bags" containing gospel literature. This gospel witness has been tolerated so far by the police and authorities, apparently because we do not merchandise nor seek that the people we contact join anything. (We do Gospel witness, not church witness.) Teams of 2, 4 and 6 co-workers have for three years continued in this exercise in the different areas of Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories.

As with all believers everywhere, we do not know the number of our days. A sense of sad loss it has been to witness more than 40,000 families choosing to leave Hong Kong for U.K., Australia, Canada etc. Those known to us who have left are settling in well and are happy there. (A further 96,000 have qualified to use a British National Overseas BNO passport to move to the U.K.). We lost another lovely family this month who emigrated to Toronto, Canada with their lovely 9-year-old daughter, because they did not want her to be educated under a Marxist school curriculum.

Our duties locally have been in the Austin Avenue Assembly, where responsibility is to function as a co-elder and trustee of this 100+ year old Gospel Hall testimony in Hong Kong. We have sought to keep free of all offered government "so-called-benefit," help, which, you will understand, under socialism, very soon turns out to be an "unhelpful intrusion" and control.

## • NORTH KOREA

On one of our seed-sowing visits to North Korea, I was arrested, and initially given a 15-year prison sentence for what they claimed to be 3 serious crimes against the D.P.R. of KOREA. Being then 75 years young, a 15-year sentence would have been, in fact, a life-sentence. But the faithful in the body of Christ beseeched the Living GOD for us in prayer.

Dramatically they reduced the sentence to a 5 year one, then amazingly eventually even to a 5-week sentence, and then in weeks, not years I was released! PTL.

Since release, we have sought to return to North Korea on three different occasions, but they refused visas each time. Although not able to revisit North Korea, we none-the-less continue to print Korean Bibles in inland China. 10,000 Korean Bibles were delivered into the hands of Korean/Chinese co-workers at the North Korean border. Currently we are answering the request to provide 100,000 North Korean believers with a print run of a further 10,000 North Korean Bibles.

## • INLAND CHINA

What has been achieved within China in these recent 30 years economically and socially, has been truly remarkable. At the end of Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1976, the country existed as a poor, agriculture-based economy. After the call by CCP leader Deng Xiaoping, "to open up the country," the economic growth has been nothing short of amazing.

And now with the introduction of ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, the Communist Party has chosen this major pathway to continue control of China's millions. The very science of A.I. without a GOD-FACTOR has found great and complete resonance with the CCP. High-tech digital development using smart-phones, video surveillance, facial recognition technology, along with a super social-media control network that is able to monitor and control by reward, bribe and punishment, along with an amazing social credit and demerit system, have turned the whole country into a police state.

Just as, according to historians, The GREAT WALL of China was eventually breached, so also was the GREAT BAMBOO CURTAIN!! And now CHINA'S GREAT DIGITAL FIREWALL is also being breached through the indomitable hunger and thirst for freedom and truth.

Yes, there has been an active, accelerated repressive war upon Christians and in fact repression has intensified upon all forms of belief that run counter to the demanded submission of the socialist-communist-state.

The faithful in Christ here are resolutely able and continue to rise to the challenge of these headwinds of opposition and persecution. **Many unregistered house-church assemblies may need to go further underground but be assured the Church of GOD (the body of Christ) is by no means underground! It is alive, vibrant, well and real – if it were not so, why such paranoid effort to repress and control it with such intensity!**

"MORE PERSECUTION – MORE BLESSING! More suffering – more joy," is often heard in their vibrant testimonies.

Time and space do not permit me to speak of the millions who are so brave in the courage of their faith, witnessing, meeting and worshipping the Living GOD and our Lord Jesus Christ outside of government control. I have been privileged to meet with some of them throughout the provinces for these many years, and so we can report that the church that our Lord Jesus is building is safe and sound in His Hands in Communist China today. The prayer meeting floors are often wet with the tears of these saints in China who are in earnest combat for their country, freedom and life as believers.

MARANATHA! P.T.L!

–John A. Short  
Written - October 2022.

**Prayer Requests -**

For John and Karen

The Christian Book Room in Hong Kong

The Christians in Hong Kong

The Christians in North Korea

The Christians in China, and especially the unregistered house-church assemblies

For the printing and distribution of Bibles and Gospel literature throughout China and Southeast Asia.

For John & Karen Short

**CHRISTIAN BOOK ROOM**  
**P.O. Box 95413, Tsim Sha Tsui,**  
**Kowloon, Hong Kong, SAR of China.**